

Serial. No. 09/911,051

REMARKS

Claims 1-17, 19, 21-29, 31 and 32 are presently pending, claims 18, 20 and 30 having been deleted herein without prejudice or disclaimer and claim 32 having been added. Support for claim 32 can be found, for example, in Fig. 2

Claim 30 was objected to in the Office Action as dependent upon a rejected base claim (i.e., claim 1). Claim 1 now contains the subject matter of claim 30, written in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Allowance of claim 1 is therefore requested.

Claim 2 was objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. This claim has been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested in the Office Action. Allowance is therefore requested.

Claims 3 and 4 were objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Allowance is requested in view of the amendment of claim 2 above.

Claim 5 depends from claim 1, which is in a condition for allowance as noted above. Claim 6 depends from claim 5. Allowance of claims 5 and 6 is therefore requested.

Claim 7 was objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested in the Office Action. Allowance is therefore requested.

Claim 8 was allowed in the Office Action.

Claims 9-12 depend from claim 1, which is in a condition for allowance as noted above.

Claims 13 and 14 were allowed in the Office Action.

Claim 15 is believed to be in a condition for allowance, because it presently contains limitations analogous to claim 30. Claim 30 was indicated to be allowable in the Office Action, but for its dependence upon a rejected base claim.

Claims 16, 17 and 19 depend from claim 15. Allowance of claims 16, 17, and 19 is requested in view of the amendment to claim 15 above.

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Claims 18 and 20 are cancelled.

Claim 21 is believed to be in a condition for allowance, because it presently contains limitations analogous to claim 30. Claim 30 was indicated to be allowable in the Office Action, but for its dependence upon a rejected base claim.

Claim 22 was objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. This claim has been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested in the Office Action. Allowance is therefore requested.

Claims 23 and 24 were objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Allowance is requested in view of the above amendment of claim 22.

Claim 25-28 depend from claim 21, which is believed to be in a condition for allowance as noted above.

Claim 29 was objected to in the Office Action as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. This claim has been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as suggested in the Office Action. Allowance is requested.

Claim 30 has been deleted, because its limitations have been incorporated into claim 1.

The dependency of claim 31 has been changed from claim 1 to claim 7, which is in a condition for allowance as noted above.

Claim 32 has been added. Claim 32, depends from claim 1, which is in a condition for allowance as noted above.

In view of the above amendments, the outstanding rejection of claims 1, 5, 6, 9-12, 15, 21, 27 and 31 under 35 USC §102(b) and/or 103(a) are believed to be moot, and claims 1-17, 19, 21-29, 31 and 32 are believed to be in a condition for allowance.

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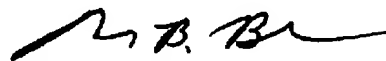
CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that claims 1-17, 19, 21-29, 31 and 32 are presently in condition for allowance, early notification of which is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner be of the view that an interview would expedite consideration of this Amendment or of the application at large, the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicant's attorney at (703) 433-0510 in order to resolve any outstanding issues in this case.

FEES

The Office is authorized to charge the additional claims fee as well as any other fees required to deposit account number 50-1047.

Respectfully submitted,



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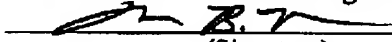
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I hereby certify that this document and any document referenced herein are being sent to the United States Patent and Trademark office via Facsimile to: 703-872-9302 on June 13, 2003.

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